

MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

SECRET - GDS

REFER TO DOS

INFORMATION

June 20, 1975

ARMY REVIEWED 17-Feb-2011: NO OBJECTION TO DECLASSIFICATION

MEMORANDUM FOR: GENERAL SCOWCROFT
FROM: CLINTON E. GRANGER *cl*
SUBJECT: Briefing on Chemical Warfare

OK

As part of the continuing series of informational briefings being presented by the Army Staff for the NSC Staff, a briefing on Soviet and U.S. chemical warfare will be given at 2:30 p.m. on July 2.

The scope of the presentation, which will be about an hour, is contained at Tab A.

DOS REVIEWED 24 FEB 2011 NO OBJECTION TO DECLASSIFICATION

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Soviet vs US Chemical Warfare

The US CW and CB defense posture is based on the policy of no first use of CW and no use at all of biological weapons. The primary purpose, then, of the US CW capability is to deter and failing that, to defend and have the capability to retaliate, if authorized by the President.

Soviet policy has not been publicly stated, however, the Soviet organization for CW, its indepth training for CW in the Army, and its tactical doctrine indicate that CW could be employed if a significant advantage would result.

The US CW organization has been functionalized by integration into the staffs of headquarters and tactical elements. Few purely chemical functions are identified in organizational elements.

The Soviets utilize a vertical, dedicated CW organization beginning at the Defense Ministry level. Chemical defense units are organic to all organizations from the top down to tactical regiments.

US forces receive minimal CBR defense instruction in basic combat and advanced individual training with some practical problems included in training tests and unit field exercises. Because of the degradation in unit effectiveness that would be imposed by a realistic simulation of CW environment, effective CW defense training is sometimes neglected. No large scale maneuvers using simulant or toxic chemical agents have been held for US forces.

Soviet forces are undoubtedly the best trained in CW in the world. Basic advanced and unit training in CBR defense and large scale field exercises and maneuvers utilizing toxic chemicals are a routine part of their operations.

The US has a limited deterrent/retaliatory CW capability. Limited quantities of chemical artillery rounds are stockpiled in Germany.

The Soviets have developed and stockpiled highly toxic chemical agents for dissemination by the most modern means, such as missiles, and have also adapted older agents to current weapons, such as high mobile rocket artillery. Critical intelligence gaps regarding this capability do exist but considerable firm intelligence is available to support the assessment that the Soviets could initiate large scale CW operations, either alone or with conventional or nuclear weapons.

All US forces have adequate protective masks and USAREUR forces have protective clothing. Mobilization reserve stock funds have not yet been allocated for procurement of protective clothing for other US combat forces.

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Classified By:

SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION

SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652

AUTOMATICALLY DOWNGRADED AT TWO

YEAR INTERVALS

No Objection To Declassification in Full 2011/05/02 : LOC-HAK-73-6-7-7

DECLASSIFIED ON DECEMBER 31, 2011

Current plans call for the utilization of the active ingredients contained in the Soviet syrettes captured during the Middle East Conflict of 1973 and manufacturing this antidote and placing it into the US autoinjector for delivery to the EUCOM D-day force for use against the Soviet nerve agent, SOMAN (GD).

The Soviet CW defensive capability is probably the best in the world. Protection, detection and decontamination equipment is of overall excellent quality and issued to all forces.

The current US capability to meet the threat posed by the USSR is less than desirable. However, the deficiencies are primarily quantitative and are being addressed as future programs are being planned. The material to correct qualitative deficiencies is under development and research is underway.